

September 10, 2004

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Suite 10200
Washington, D.C. 20590

**Re: Docket # OST-2004-29077
2005/2006 U.S.-China Air Services Case and Designations**

Dear Secretary Mineta:

It is my understanding that the Department will soon be deciding on an award of new route rights to two U.S. carriers for service between the U.S. and China, one starting March 2005 and a second beginning March 2006. I am writing to indicate my strong support for Continental Airlines' application for the right to inaugurate service between New York/Newark Liberty and China.

Due in large part to the impressive expansion of Continental's Global Gateway in Newark, the number of international destinations served non-stop from Liberty International Airport has risen dramatically over the past few years. With more than 400 daily departures to over 140 nonstop destinations throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia, Continental's strong operation, global connectivity and award-winning customer service have made the carrier the best and most preferred choice for travel in and out of the New York region.

Currently, no service exists between Liberty International Airport and China, and no U.S. carrier serves China from the New York City metropolitan area. No other application before the Department holds as much benefit to the flying public as Continental's proposal to operate daily service between New York/Newark and China – a missing link and key component to Continental's and the region's expansion plans. Continental has proven its ability to serve long-haul Asian markets from Liberty International with successful nonstop service to both Tokyo and Hong Kong. With this legacy of performance, and as the largest airline serving the New York/Newark area, Continental is uniquely qualified to provide consumers with superior service and effective competition in this crucial market.

When making your decision between the competing applications for new route rights to China, the choice is clear. I urge you to award these frequencies to Continental Airlines, serving Metropolitan New York City, the City of Newark, and the State of New Jersey.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara E. Beaman
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